

Environments Encouraging Flourishing

Nurturing Developing Minds 2019

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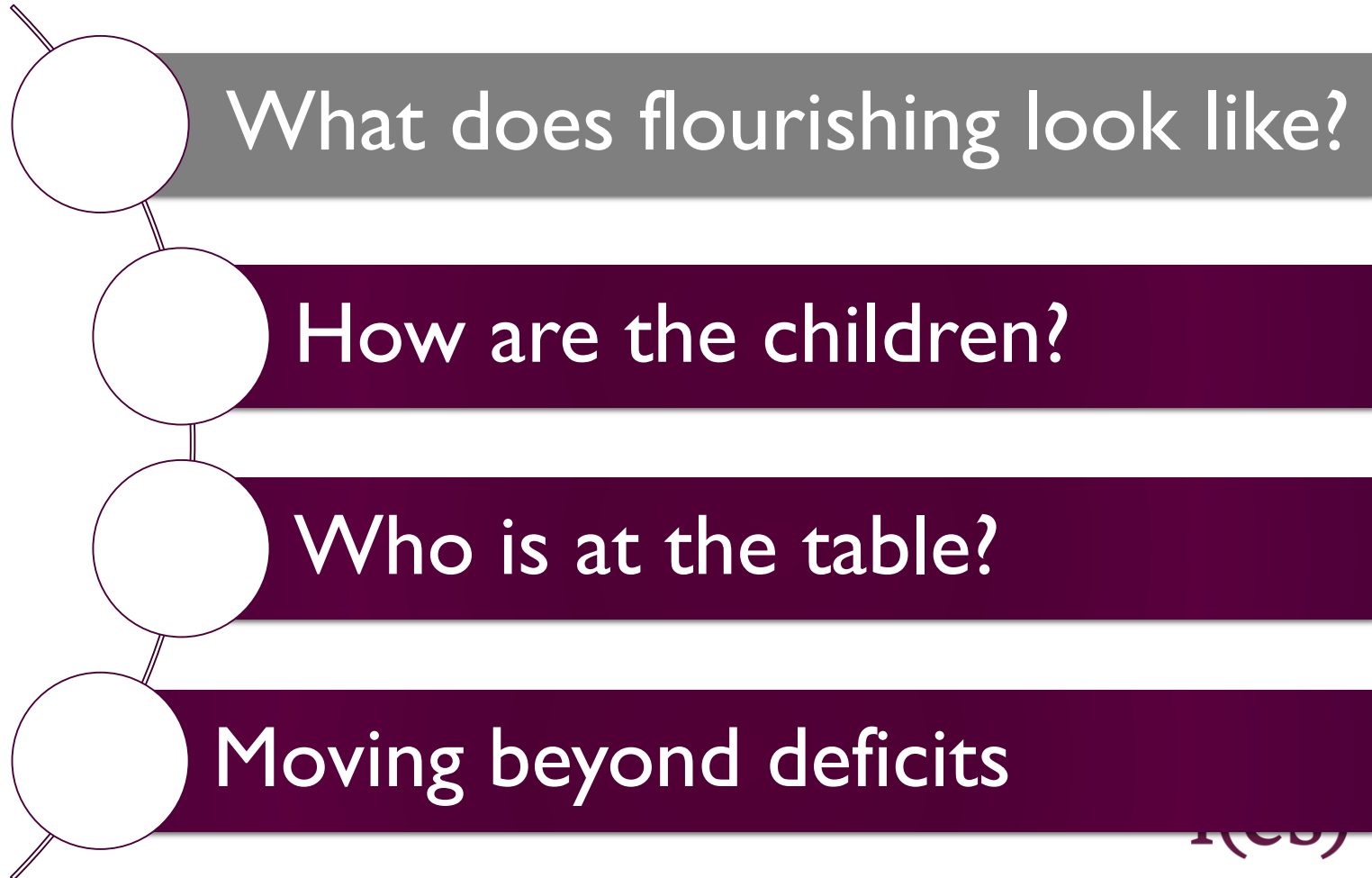
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Who's In The Room?

- Teacher/child care provider
- Administrator/Program director
- Special education provider
- Health care provider
- Community volunteer
- Mental health provider
- Community program staffer
- Aunt/uncle/grandparent
- Parent
- Neighbor

Roadmap



Imagine the ideal environment, in your mind, for a new baby



What does home look like?

What does home feel like?

Who is there?

How do they feel?

What do they need?

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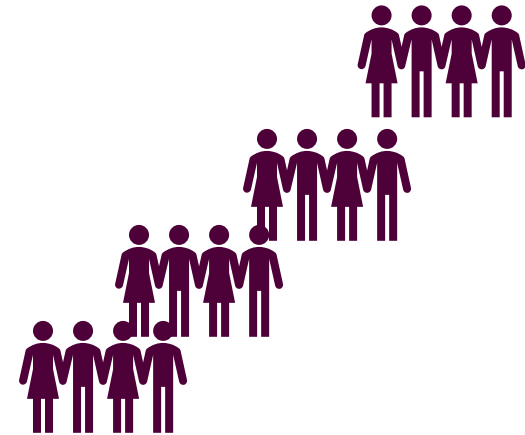
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What is a flourishing environment?

“Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her.”

- Child development expert Urie Bronfenbrenner

But how do we build **systems** and create a society crazy about kids?

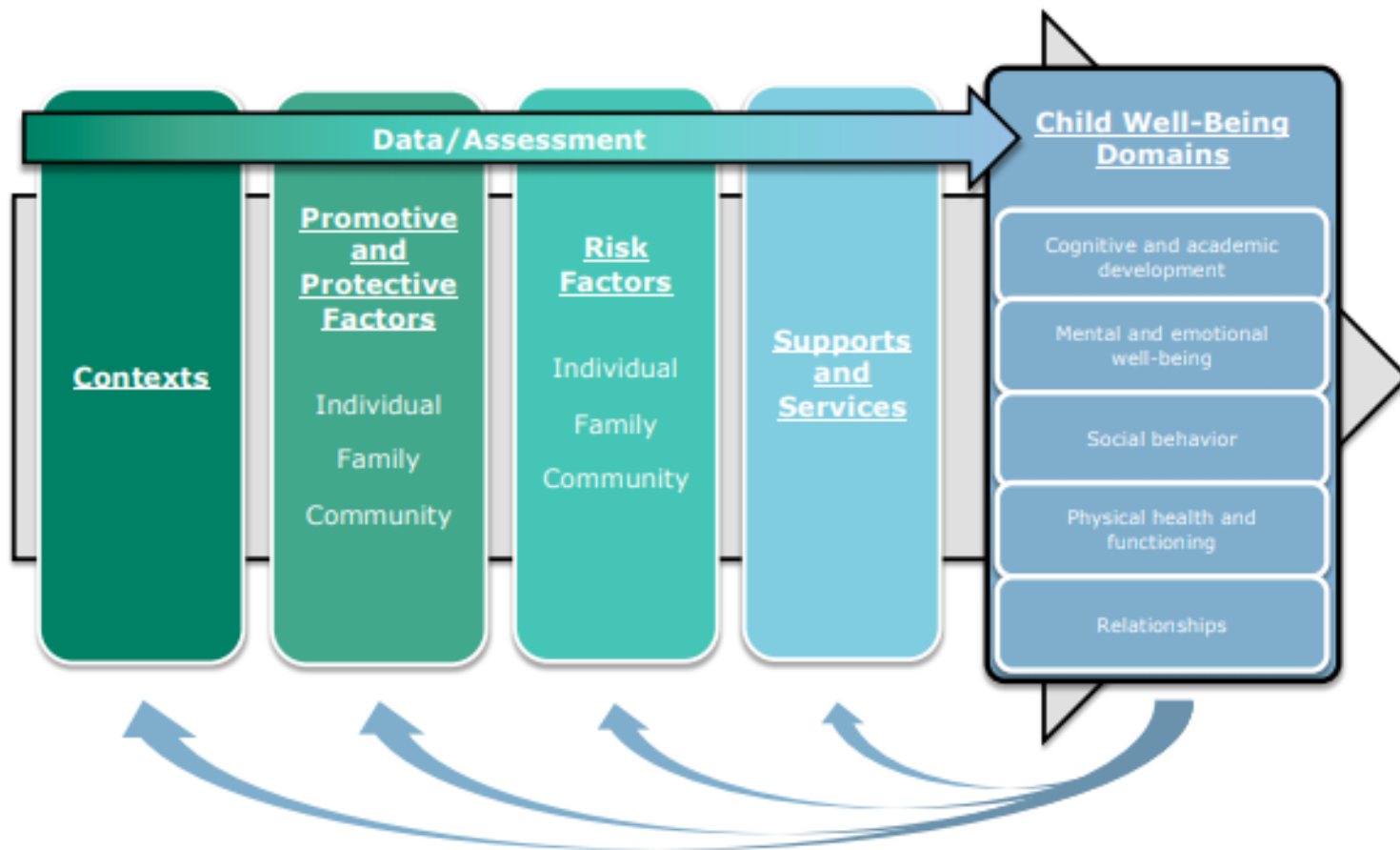


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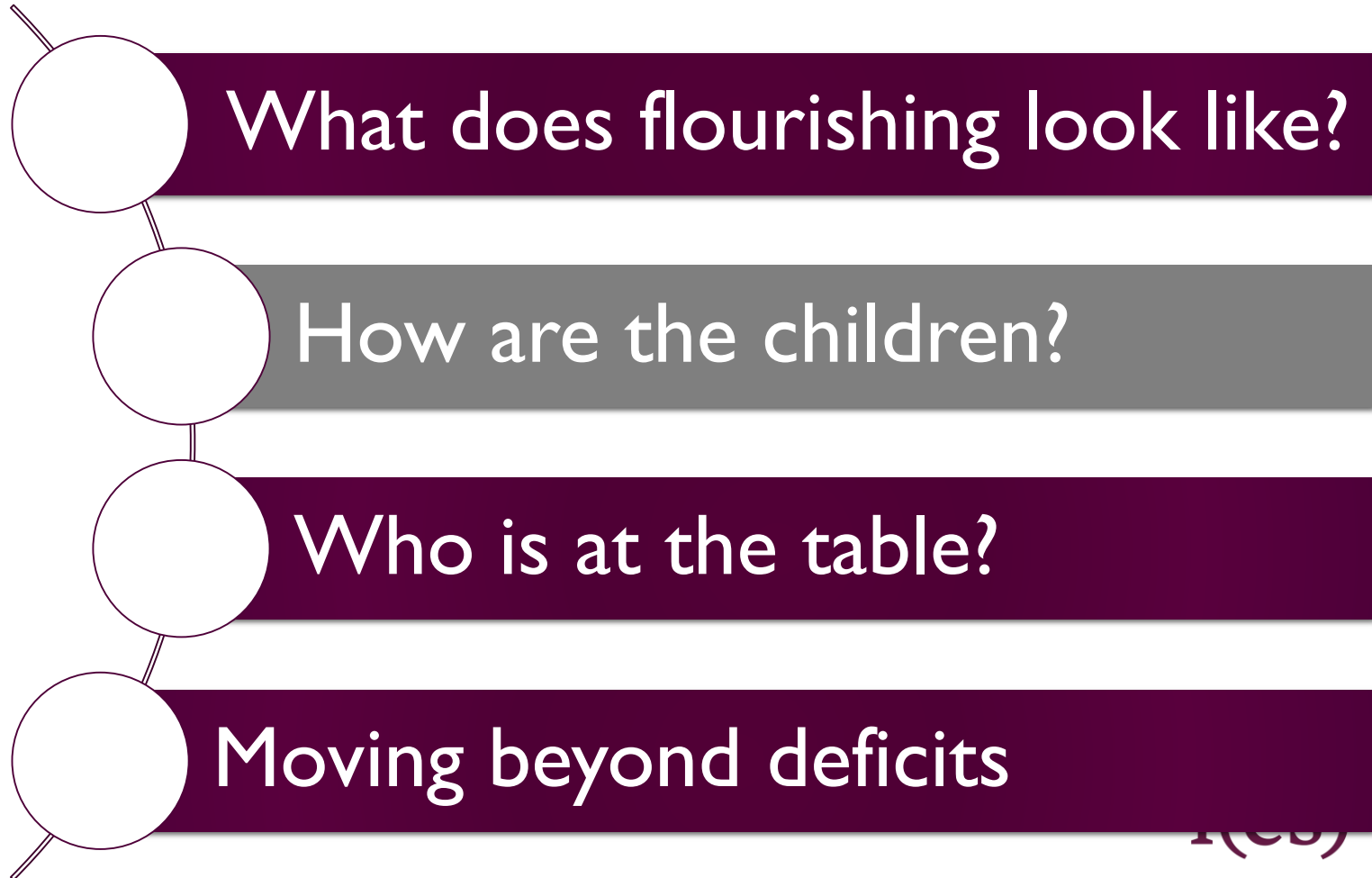
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What does “flourishing” mean?

Figure 1: Conceptual model for child well-being



Roadmap



How are the children?



23% of under 18s in SC live in poverty

- 18% nationwide



12.8% of parents with young kids in SC report work-child care conflicts

- 8.7% nationwide



54% of under 6s below 200% FPL

- 43% nationwide



9.6% of births in SC are low birthweight

- 8.2% national

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“Risk Factors”

The National Center for Children in Poverty identifies the following “risk factors”:

- living in poverty
- single parent
- teen mother
- low parental education level
- non-employed parents
- residential mobility
- households without English speakers
- large family size



(Let’s talk about the term “risk factors”)



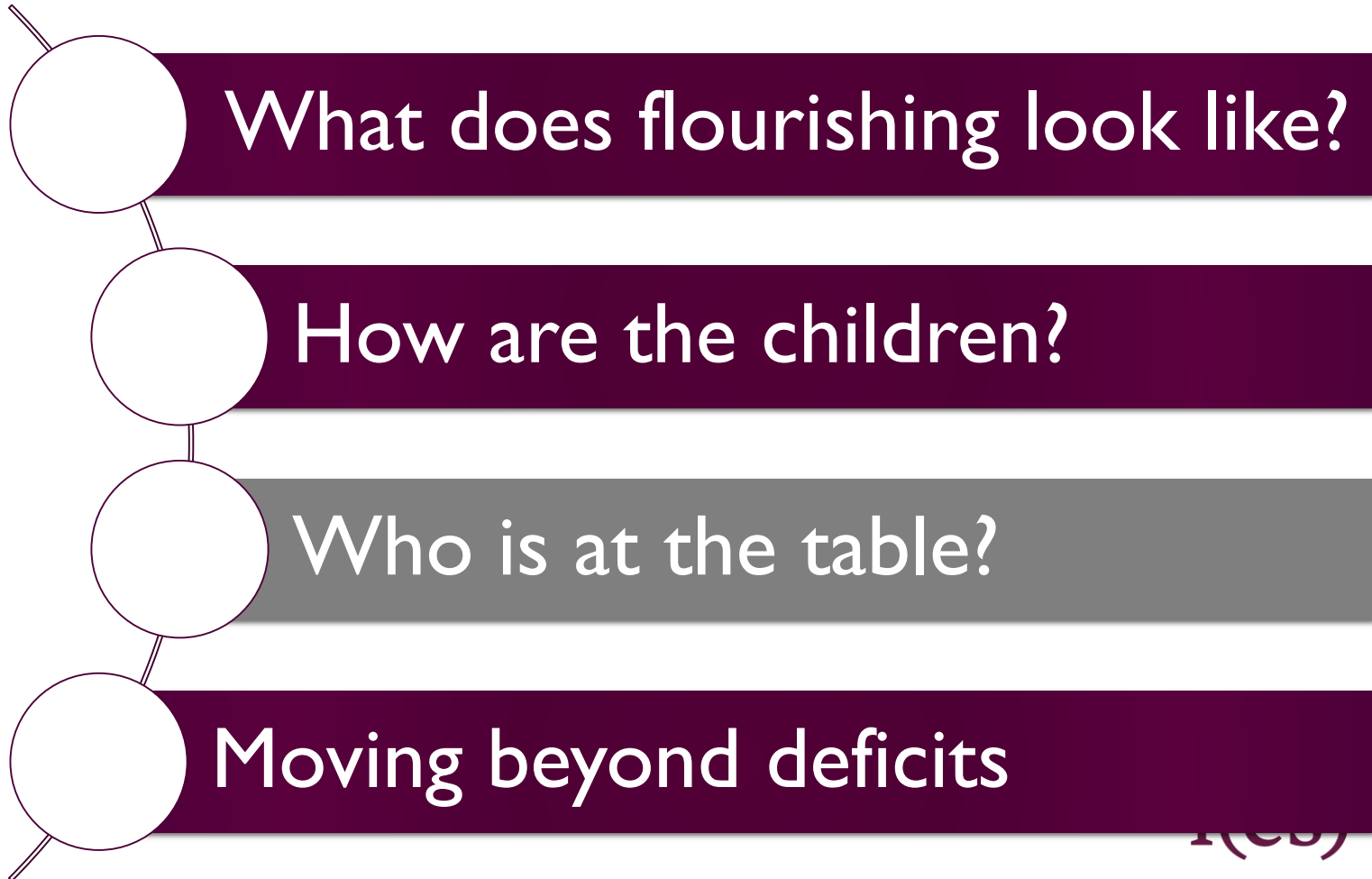
South Carolina's Children



Clemson football fans at a home game

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Roadmap



The Key Players



Families, including the members of the immediate household in which children live as well as extended family members and family friends



Policymakers, including state and local government officials and advocacy groups



Program providers, primarily referring to child care center and preschool personnel (both administrators and classroom professionals) as well as elementary school teachers



Community-members, comprising those living and working in communities, including business owners, medical providers, community-based organizations, and faith-based institutions.

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Safe, Stable, Nurturing Relationships

- Attachment - a reciprocal relationship between a baby and an adult
- Complex give-and-take of physical, verbal, and emotional interactions
- Developed through repeated exposure and engagement in which children learn they can rely on an adult
- Children are able to develop secure attachment to non-parental caregivers from an early age
 - 9-month-olds are receptive to a friendly, engaged, sensitive babysitter after only 30 minutes together

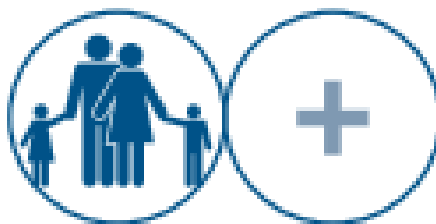


How do we define “family”?



NUCLEAR FAMILIES

Married parents and their own unmarried children under the age of 22.



EXTENDED FAMILIES

A group of individuals whose relationships to each other extend beyond the nuclear family.

Extended Family Definitions

Vertical



Downward

adult progeny:

Primary families

hosting unmarried adult

progeny at least

22 years of age



Downward; other

Primary families

hosting adult children

with their own spouses/

partners/children



Upward

Primary families

hosting aging parents/

parents-in-law, with

or without the parents'

own spouses/partners

Horizontal



Primary families

hosting siblings or

other same-generation

relatives with or

without their own

spouses/partners/

children

Other



Multiple extension

families: Primary

families with vertical

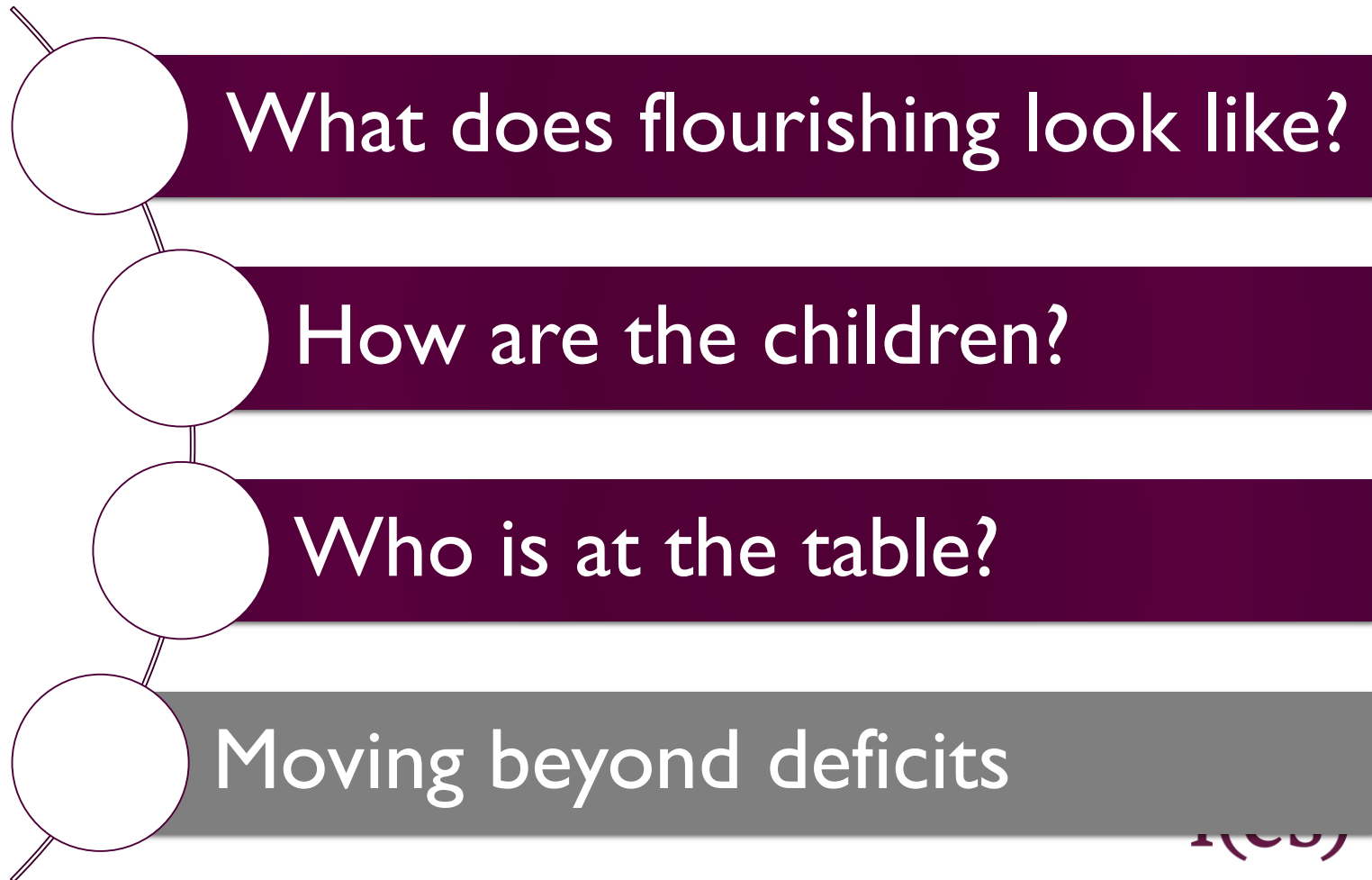
and horizontal

extensions.

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Roadmap



Shifting to Strengths-Based Thinking

- Social Determinants of Health -“factors such as where we live,...genetics, our income and education level, and our relationships with friends and family [that] all have considerable impacts on health”
 - Economic Stability,
 - Education,
 - Social and Community Context,
 - Health and Healthcare, and
 - Neighborhood and Built Environment
- *The World Health Organization*



Family Strengthening

- Strengthening Families: “a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.”
- *Approach* - not model - focused on families, programs, & communities



Moving Away from “Deficit Thinking”

PRESCHOOL

Let's Stop Talking About The '30 Million Word Gap'

June 1, 2018 · 6:00 AM ET

Heard on All Things Considered



ANYA KAMENETZ



 NEW
AMERICA

This new line of critique suggests word gap efforts may reinforce damaging deficit perspectives about low-income families and linguistically diverse students. A [study](#) published in the most recent issue of the Harvard Education Review found that acceptance of the word gap drove deficit-based thinking among educators, which in turn had negative effects on the instruction offered to low-income Latinx immigrant children.

BROOKINGS

BROWN CENTER CHALKBOARD

It's time to move beyond the word gap

Douglas E. Sperry, Linda L. Sperry, and Peggy J. Miller · Tuesday, June 12, 2018

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Moving Away from “Deficit Thinking”



LANGUAGE NUTRITION

Language Nutrition™ – A Public Health and Education Imperative

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Adverse Childhood Experiences

- A quarter of SC's current children have been exposed to two or more ACEs (via CAHMI)
- 38% of SC's current adult population had exposure to more than two ACEs in their childhood.

Physical abuse

Sexual abuse

Emotional abuse

Physical neglect

Emotional neglect

Mother treated violently

Substance misuse within household

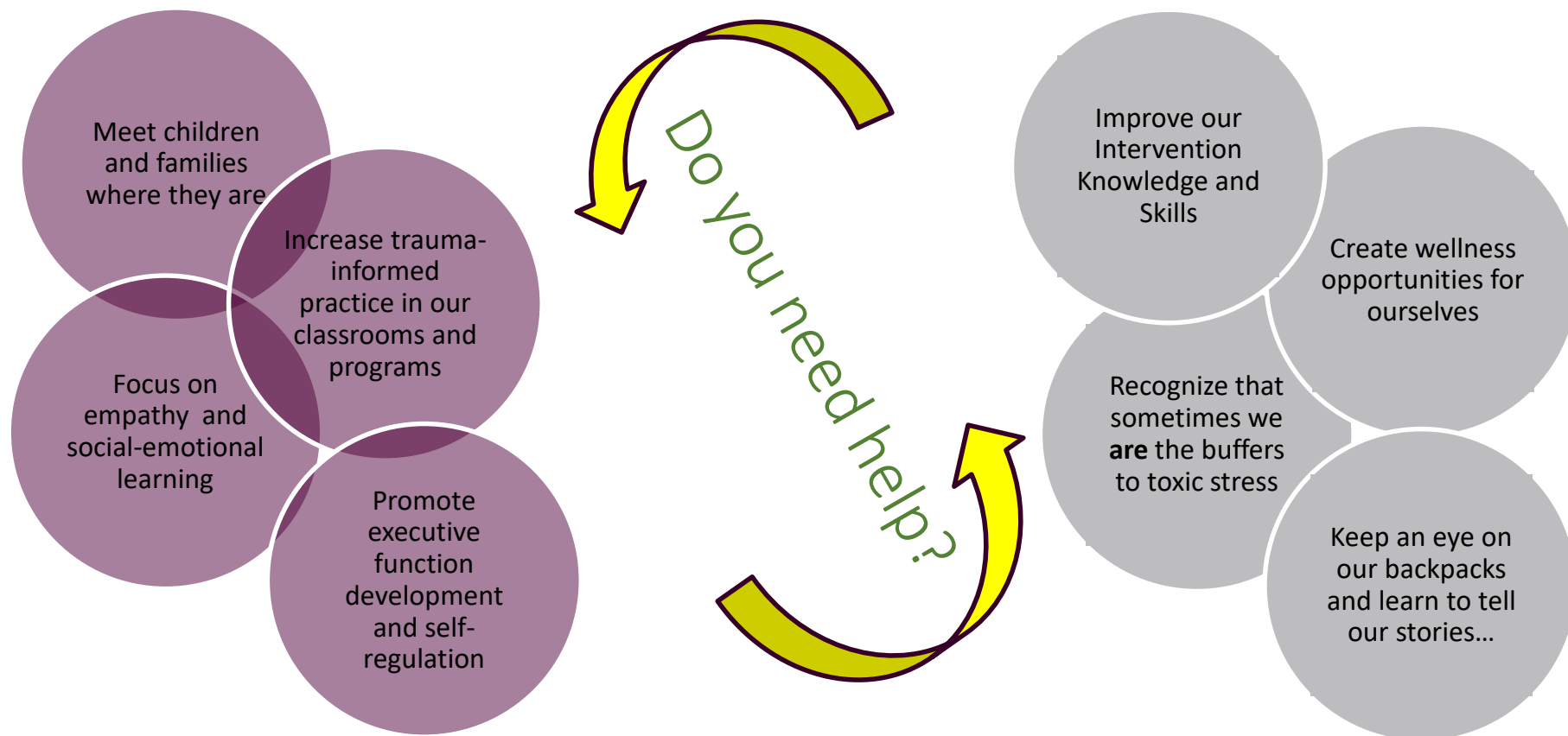
Household mental illness

Parental separation or divorce

Incarcerated household member

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Science-Informed Pathways to Resiliency



Source: Gruendel, J. (2019). *Going deeper on Resilience: Companion slides to the film*. Screening in Columbia, SC, hosted by WREN and the S.C. Department of Education. <https://www.instituteforchildsuccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019-Resilience-in-Columbia-JG-ICS-formatted.pptx>

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Infusing Mindfulness

Integrating effective mindfulness practices benefits individuals and the system at large.

Parents

- Improves family interactions, improved problem solving,
- Develops routines and minimizes distractions

Children

- Better impulse control, academic performance
- Reduced inter-family conflict

Providers

- Relieves emotional burdens
- Possible impact on turnover rates
- Strengthens relationships with families

Discussion





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